

DATES

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February 1

ASQ meets: The Bay Area section of the American Society of Quality will meet at 6 p.m. at the Ramada King's Inn on NASA Road One. No reservations are required. For more information contact Ann Dorris at x38620.

February 2

Astronomy seminar: The JSC Astronomy Seminar Club will meet at noon February 2, 9, 16 and 23 in Bldg. 31, Rm. 248A. For more information call Al Jackson at x35037.

Spaceteam Toastmasters meet: The Spaceteam Toastmasters will meet at 11:30 a.m. February 2, 9, 16 and 23 at United Space Alliance, 600 Gemini. For additional information call Patricia Blackwell at (281) 280-6863.

February 3

Communicators meet: The Clear Lake Communicators, a Toastmasters club, will meet at 11:30 a.m. February 3, 10, 17 and 24 at Freeman Library, 16602 Diana Lane. For more information call Allen Prescott at (281) 282-3281 or Mark Caronna at (281) 282-4306.

February 6

Warning System Test: The site-wide Employee Warning System will perform its monthly audio test at noon. For more information call Bob Gaffney at x34249.

Managers meet: Bob Chapman, an organizational development consultant, will be the featured speaker at the National Management Association luncheon at 11:15 a.m. at the Gilruth Center. For more information contact Cindy Neal at x32202 or visit www.jsc.nasa.gov/ot_nma/

February 8

Aero club meets: The Bay Area Aero Club will meet at 7 p.m. at the Houston Gulf Airport clubhouse at 2750 FM 1266 in League City. For details call Larry Hendrickson at x32050.

Space society meets: The Clear Lake area chapter of the National Space Society will meet at 6:30 p.m. at the Freeman Memorial Branch Library, 16602 Diana Lane. For more information call Murray Clark at (281) 367-2227.

NPMA meets: The National Property Management Association will meet at 5 p.m. at Robinette and Doyle Caterers, 216 Kirby in Seabrook. Dinner costs \$14. For more information call Sina Hawsey at x36582.

February 9

IAAP meets: The Clear Lake/NASA chapter of the International Association of Administrative Professionals will meet at 5:30 p.m. at Bay Oaks Country Club. Cost is \$16. For details and reservations call Tami Barbour at (281) 488-0055, x238.

February 10

Airplane club meets: The Radio Control Airplane Club will meet at 7 p.m. at the Clear Lake Park building. For additional information call Bill Langdoc at x35970.

MAES meets: The Society of Mexican-American Engineers and Scientists will meet at 11:30 a.m. in Bldg. 16, Rm. 111. For more information call George Salazar at x30162.

SSQ meets: Dr. Chuck Hoffman, Barrios Technology, will be the featured speaker at the Society for Software Quality brown bag luncheon. The event will be held at Barrios Technology, 2525 Bay Area Blvd., Ste. 300 at noon. For more information call Renne Peterson at 281 282-4392.

February 11

Astronomers meet: The JSC Astronomical Society will meet at 7:30 p.m. at the Center for Advanced Space Studies, 3600 Bay Area Blvd. For details call Chuck Shaw at x35416.

February 13

Westside NSS meets: The "Westside" group of the Clear Lake area chapter of the National Space Society will meet at 2 p.m. at Silicon Graphics, 11490 Westheimer, Suite 100. For more information call Murray Clark at (281) 367-2227.

February 15

AIAA meets: AIAA Life Sciences, Space Processes and Human Factors Technical Committee presents a "Lunch and Learn" event at 11:30 in Bldg. 37, Rm. 2. The featured presentation will be "Protection against Decompression Sickness on Mars" by Johnny Conkin, Ph.D. Call Karin Loftin at x41122 for reservations.

February 16

Scuba club meets: The Lunarfans will meet at 7:30 p.m. For more information call Mike Manering at x32618.

PAYLOAD SAFETY CONFERENCE

The Nassau Bay Hilton, Houston, will be the site of a Payload Safety Conference on February 23-25, 2000. The conference theme is "Mission Success Starts with Safety."

The objectives of the conference are to provide payload organizations with a common, accurate understanding of payload safety technical and process requirements, to foster synergy within the payload safety community, and to promote payload safety as the foundation for mission success. The conference is primarily intended for personnel responsible for the design and safety certification of International Space Station and shuttle payloads, including payload safety engineers, project managers, and technical support specialists.

General sessions will include presentations on payload safety challenges in the ISS era, the payload safety Data Management System, and

process and technical requirements for both ground and space flight safety. More specialized sessions will be offered on technical topics, including pressure systems and pressure vessels, batteries, materials, structures, fracture control, fire detection and suppression, extravehicular activity, toxicology, electrical power distribution, and bonding and grounding.

Dr. Bonnie Dunbar will address attendees at the conference luncheon on February 24.

The conference Web site is located at www.rsis.com/nasa/conference/intro/

If you have any questions, contact Michael Ciancone at 281-483-8848 or e-mail at mciancon@ems.jsc.nasa.gov.

NASA BRIEFS

NASA SELECTS 25 SMALL BUSINESS PROJECTS

America's space agency does more than explore space: It also stimulates small and disadvantaged businesses to develop new technologies. To this end, NASA has selected 25 research proposals for negotiation of Phase 2 contract awards for its Small Business Innovation Research Program. The total value of the awards is expected to be more than \$15 million and will be conducted by 25 firms in 12 states.

These selections will assist future NASA missions by providing advanced technologies in such areas as high-optical-quality, lightweight reflectors and mirrors; high-speed digital communications links with reduced power and size requirements; and reduced mass requirements for spacecraft thermal-control systems.

Phase 2 continues development of the most promising previously selected Phase 1 projects. Selection criteria include scientific and technical merit, future importance and eventual value of the innovation to NASA, company capabilities and commercial potential. Funding for Phase 2 contracts may be up to \$600,000 for a two-year performance period.

SBIR contractors submitted 319 Phase 2 proposals; 103 of these proposals were selected on August 27, 1999. Based on current budget availability, these additional 25 selections now are being announced. A listing of the selected companies can be found on the Internet at: <http://sbir.nasa.gov>

GALILEO FINDINGS BOOST IDEA OF OTHER-WORLDFLY OCEAN

When NASA's Galileo spacecraft recently swooped past Jupiter's moon Europa, it picked up powerful new evidence that a liquid ocean lies beneath Europa's icy crust.

As the spacecraft flew 218 miles above the icy moon on January 3, its magnetometer instrument studied changes in the direction of Europa's magnetic field. Galileo's magnetometer observed directional changes consistent with the type that would occur if Europa contained a shell of electrically conducting material, such as a salty, liquid ocean.

"I think these findings tell us that there is indeed a layer of liquid water beneath Europa's surface," said Dr. Margaret Kivelson, principal investigator for the magnetometer. "I'm cautious by nature, but this new evidence certainly makes the argument for the presence of an ocean far more persuasive."

It appears that the ocean lies beneath the surface somewhere in the outer 60 miles, the approximate thickness of the ice/water layer, according to Kivelson, a researcher at the University of California, Los Angeles.

The new evidence was gathered during a flyby specially planned so that the observed position of Europa's north pole would make it clear whether or not it moves. In fact, the data showed that its position had moved, thus providing key evidence for the existence of an ocean.

Additional information and pictures taken by Galileo are available at <http://galileo.jpl.nasa.gov>

